

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2001–SW–63–AD; Amendment 39–12775; AD 2002–12–03]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS332L2 Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Model AS332L2 helicopters. This action requires removing the main rotor shaft non-rotating scissors (non-rotating scissors) from the swashplate balljoint and inspecting for friction or play in the hinges between the two links of the non-rotating scissors, or between the non-rotating scissors link and the flared housing, and replacing the non-rotating scissors, if necessary. This amendment is prompted by the discovery of in-service damage to main rotor shaft non-rotating scissors attachment hinges. The actions specified in this AD are intended to prevent friction on non-rotating scissors, failure of the swashplate, loss of main rotor pitch control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

DATES: Effective June 27, 2002.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the regulations is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of June 27, 2002.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before August 12, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2001–SW–63–AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. You may also send comments electronically to the Rules Docket at the following address: 9-asw-adcomments@faa.gov.

The service information referenced in this AD may be obtained from American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, Texas 75053–4005, telephone (972) 641–3460, fax (972) 641–3527. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Grigg, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Standards Staff, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0110, telephone (817) 222-5490, fax (817) 222-5961.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), the airworthiness authority for France, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on Eurocopter Model AS332L2 helicopters. The DGAC advises that some cases of in-service damage to the main rotor shaft non-rotating scissors attachment hinge have been discovered.

Eurocopter has issued Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. 05.00.56, dated February 1, 2001, which specifies a check of the non-rotating scissors hinges on the main rotor shaft for evidence of seizure on the interface of the various tungsten-carbide bushings of the hinges that may lead to the seizure of a hinge. The DGAC classified this service bulletin as mandatory and issued AD 2001-085-018(A), dated March 7, 2001, to ensure the continued airworthiness of these helicopters in France.

This helicopter model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of 14 CFR 21.29 and the applicable bilateral agreement. Pursuant to the applicable bilateral agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that may be certificated for operation in the United States at a future date.

This unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of the same type design if registered in the United States. Therefore, this AD is being issued to prevent friction on the non-rotating scissors, failure of the swashplate, loss of main rotor pitch control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter. This AD requires removing the non-rotating scissors from the swashplate balljoint and inspecting for friction or play in the hinges between the two links of the non-rotating scissors, or between the non-rotating scissors link and the flared housing, and replacing the non-rotating scissors if friction or play is detected. The actions must be accomplished in accordance with the service bulletin described previously.

None of the Eurocopter Model AS332L2 helicopters affected by this action are on the U.S. Register. All helicopters included in the applicability of this rule are currently operated by non-U.S. operators under foreign registry; therefore, they are not directly affected by this AD action. However, the FAA considers that this rule is necessary to ensure that the unsafe condition is addressed in the event that any of these subject helicopters are imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future.

Should an affected helicopter be imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, it would require approximately 6 work hours to accomplish the required actions, at an average labor rate of \$60 per work hour. Based on these figures, the cost impact of this AD would be \$360 per helicopter.

Since this AD action does not affect any helicopter that is currently on the U.S. register, it has no adverse economic impact and imposes no additional burden on any person. Therefore, notice and public procedures hereon are unnecessary and the amendment may be made effective in less than 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Comments Invited

Although this action is in the form of a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety and, thus, was not preceded by notice and an opportunity for public comment, comments are invited on this rule. Interested persons are invited to comment on this rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified under the caption ADDRESSES. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered, and this rule may be amended in light of the comments received. Factual information that supports the commenter's ideas and suggestions is extremely helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the AD action and determining whether additional rulemaking action would be needed.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the rule that might suggest a need to modify the rule. All comments submitted will be available in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this AD will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their mailed comments submitted in response to this rule must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 2001-SW-63-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

The regulations adopted herein will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, it is determined that this final rule does not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132.

The FAA has determined that notice and prior public comment are unnecessary in promulgating this regulation; therefore, it can be issued immediately to correct an unsafe condition in aircraft since none of these model helicopters are registered in the United States. The FAA has also determined that this regulation is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866. It has been determined further that this action involves an emergency regulation under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979). If it is determined that this emergency regulation otherwise would be significant under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures, a final regulatory evaluation will be prepared and placed in the Rules Docket. A copy of it, if filed, may be obtained from the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration amends part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive to read as follows:

AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE



Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

We post ADs on the internet at "www.airweb.faa.gov/rgl"

The following Airworthiness Directive issued by the Federal Aviation Administration in accordance with the provisions of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 39, applies to an aircraft model of which our records indicate you may be the registered owner. Airworthiness Directives affect aviation safety and are regulations which require immediate attention. You are cautioned that no person may operate an aircraft to which an Airworthiness Directive applies, except in accordance with the requirements of the Airworthiness Directive (reference 14 CFR part 39, subpart 39.3).

Corrected Copy: *The effective date listed in paragraph (g) of this AD is incorrect. The correct effective date, as shown in the DATES portion of the AD, is June 27, 2002. The FAA and the Office of the Federal Register will issue a correction. This copy reflects the correction.*

2002-12-03 Eurocopter France: Amendment 39-12775. Docket No. 2001-SW-63-AD.

Applicability: Model AS332L2 helicopters, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (d) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent friction on the main rotor shaft non-rotating scissors (non-rotating scissors), failure of the swashplate, loss of main rotor pitch control, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) For non-rotating scissors with less than 275 hours time-in-service (TIS), before reaching 275 hours TIS and then at intervals not to exceed 275 hours TIS, remove the non-rotating scissors from the swashplate balljoint and inspect for any friction or play in accordance with paragraph 2.B.1 of the Accomplishment Instructions in Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. 05.00.56, dated February 1, 2001 (ASB).

(b) For non-rotating scissors with 275 or more hours TIS, within 50 hours TIS and then at intervals not to exceed 275 hours TIS, remove the non-rotating scissors from the swashplate balljoint and inspect for friction or play in accordance with paragraph 2.B.1 of the Accomplishment Instructions in the ASB.

(c) If friction or play is present, replace the non-rotating scissors with airworthy parts.

(d) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Regulations Group, Rotorcraft Directorate. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Regulations Group.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Regulations Group.

(e) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with 14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199 to operate the helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(f) The inspections and replacement (if replacement is necessary) shall be done in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions, paragraph 2.B.1 of Eurocopter Alert Service Bulletin No. 05.00.56, dated February 1, 2001. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from American Eurocopter Corporation, 2701 Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, Texas 75053-4005, telephone (972) 641-3460, fax (972) 641-3527. Copies may be inspected at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas; or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(g) This amendment becomes effective on June 27, 2002.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 28, 2002.

David A. Downey,

Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 02-14567 Filed 6-11-02; 8:45 am]

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